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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Dr. Dale A. Meyer, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, offered the following prayer:

Enter into this chamber, O Spirit of God, this chamber of my heart and the hearts of all who sincerely pray with me. O Most High, You know the feelings and thoughts of our hearts before they ever come to our lips. Enter in and work in us the reverence that comes from a humble acknowledgment of Your Lordship. Enter in with the inspiration of Your love for each of us, a love to which prophets, evangelists, and apostles have borne witness for our temporal and eternal good. May that love constrain us to service in this Senate that will result in greater good for our beloved Nation.

Spirit of our Creator and Redeemer, deliver us, we pray, from every evil of body and soul, property and honor this day and until that day when we stand before Your eternal throne. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, today the Senate will continue the consideration of the nomination of Miguel Estrada to be a DC Circuit Court judge.

The deliberations on the Senate floor yesterday were hearty and robust, and I believe many Senators have now had an opportunity to express their views. It is my objective to reach an agreement with the Democratic leader regarding a time for vote on this nomination.

The schedule for this week, and until the Estrada nomination is completed, is dependent upon reaching an agreement with respect to the pending nomination. I will continue to discuss with the Democratic leader the options for completing work on this important nomination. In the absence of any agreement, the Senate should expect very late evenings. My objective is to complete this nomination process with a vote this week.

The Senate also needs to complete action on the omnibus appropriations conference report when it becomes available. The conferees worked well into last night on the conference report, and I will be speaking to the chairman of the Appropriations Committee as to their success in closing out that conference. These are two very important pieces of business which must be addressed this week.

As a reminder, the Senate will recess today from 12:30 to 2:15 in order to accommodate the weekly policy luncheons.

Finally, I would forewarn all Senators that the Senate will remain in session in order to complete the Estrada nomination as well as the omnibus conference report.

I thank all Senators for their attention and look forward to the debate over the course of today, and hopefully we can reach some agreement, either this morning or this afternoon, on a time certain for a vote.

Mr. REID. Madam President, while the majority leader is on the floor and also the President pro tempore is seated in the Chamber, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee—the same person—while one may disagree with

some of the policy stands the chairman of the Appropriations Committee has taken, one has to admire the work he did last night. It was really remarkable that he had every chair and ranking member of the subcommittees there, including the chairs of the full committees and ranking members, and was able to work through that myriad of information. It is now down to where it is really close to something we can vote on this week.

While the chairman of the committee is here, I wanted to acknowledge in front of his leader the remarkable job he did last night. We look forward to some productive work this week. These are two most important matters. I am sure the Senator and our leader will have a conversation in the immediate future about the Estrada nomination.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MIGUEL A. ESTRADA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now go to executive session and resume consideration of Executive Calendar Order No. 21, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Miguel A. Estrada, of Virginia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I have heard so much misinformation

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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